which they belonged; and even the wards turned into beautiful devices and initial letters. Railings were not *casts of meagre stone tracery*, but elegant combinations of metal bars, adjusted with a due regard to strength and resistance.

There were many fine specimens of this style of railing round tombs, and Westminster Abbey was rich in such examples, but they were actually pulled down and sold for old iron by the order of the then dean, and even the exquisite scroll-work, belonging to the tomb of Queen Eleanor was not respected. The iron screen of King Edward the Fourth's tomb, at St. George's Chapel, Windsor, is a splendid example of ancient ironwork. The fire-dogs, or Andirons, as they were called, which supported either the fuel-logs where wood was burnt, or grates for coal, were frequently of splendid design. The ornaments were generally heraldic, and it was not unusual to work the finer parts in brass, for relief of colour and richness of effect. These form a striking contrast with the inconsistencies of modern grates, which are not unfrequently made to represent diminutive fronts of castellated or ecclesiastical buildings with turrets, loopholes, windows, and doorways, all in the space of forty inches. The fender is a sort of embattled parapet, with a lodge-gate at each end; the end of the poker is a sharp pointed finial; and at the summit of the tongs is a saint. It is impossible to enumerate half the absurdities of modern metal-workers; but all these proceed from the false notion of *disguising* instead of *beautifying* articles of utility. How many objects of ordinary use are rendered monstrous and ridiculous because the artist, instead of seeking the *most convenient form and then decorating it*, has embodied some extravagancies *to conceal the real purpose for which the article was made!* If a clock is required, it is not unusual to cast a Roman warrior in a flying chariot, round one of the wheels of which, on close inspection, the hours may be descried; or the whole of a cathedral church reduced to a few inches in height, with the clock-face occupying the position of a magnificent rose window. Surely the inventor of this patent clock-case could never have reflected that according to the scale on which the edifice was reduced, his clock would be about 200 feet in circumference, and that such a monster of a dial would crush the proportions of any building that could be raised. But this is nothing when compared to what we see continually produced from those inexhaustible mines of bad taste, Birmingham and Sheffield; staircase turrets for inkstands, monumental crosses for light shades, gable ends hung on handles for door porters, and four doorways and a cluster of pillars to support a French lamp; while a pair of *pinnacles* supporting an arch is called a Gothic-pattern scraper, and a wiry compound of quatrefoils and fan tracery an abbey garden seat. Neither relative scale, form, purpose, nor unity of style, is ever considered by those who design these abominations; if they only introduce a quatrefoil or an acute arch, be the outline and style of the article ever so modern and debased, it is at once denominated and sold as Gothic.

SUSPENSION ROOF.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE BUILDER.

SIR,—I have introduced the suspension principle in two or three instances with great success, where nothing else could have answered the purpose; and as it was through you that the first impression was made upon my mind of its practicability for building purposes, I at once send you a rude sketch of the last one I have used. It is to carry a roof, lead-flat, and ceiling; it is in connection with the old mansion, an enlargement of the cooking kitchen, taken out of the whole of the end wall, 30 feet wide, and making or adding to the same a large bow, which is covered with lead. I have marked the different parts as follows:

A. Suspension-rods secured to walls, 1 inch round, iron, flat in the walls.
B. Screw bolts, 1 inch round, iron.
C. Nuts at bottom of bolts, and brace.
D. Brace, 1 inch round, iron.
E. Head to brace.
F. Iron plate under wood plate, 3 inches by ½ inch, flat.
G. Wood plate, 3 inches thick.
H. Lead-flat.
I. Joists to ditto.
J. Ceiling-joists.
K. Principal beam of roof.

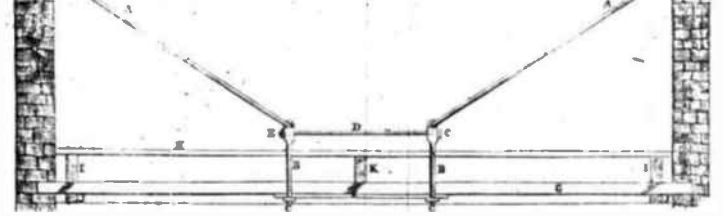
I must give you to understand the how, lead-flats, &c., were done before I came here, and supported in a manner that gave offence to every one; you will now perceive there is a straight ceiling and no obstruction to light or any thing else.

The suspension rods are fixed to the bolts as the link of a chain, the brace screws them tight together, and the bottom nuts screw up and camber the plate, which renders the whole complete and very strong. I had it put together and fixed in about two hours, so that you will perceive they can be applied in any situation without doing any damage, by merely boring the holes and making good the joint round the bolts on either a floor, roof, or flat.

I have applied others in different places, and have made them, as circumstances required, to carry scores of tons weight. They have given the greatest satisfaction possible to all concerned.

I am happy to inform you that our architect and the master-builder will both be subscribers to your valuable work. I think from this neighbourhood you will have a dozen names.

Yours most obediently, T. P. HOPE,
Clerk of Works, Richmond.



THE ENTHUSIAST.

We beg to introduce the Enthusiast to our readers, for such the world is pleased now and then to call him; his real character, however, shall be judged of by the reflecting and considerate: the name may stick to him as a matter of small account, for a wiser man than ourselves has said—"there's nothing in a name."

When we speak of the reflecting and considerate, it is not to be implied that all persons do not at times and in their way reflect and consider; but it is hard to do so while we are involved in the business of ordinary life; like players at cards, we are absorbed in the calculations that affect them, and in the consideration of the "hand" we hold. We find even the most skilful straining to recollect himself of the past progress, and speculating on the future chances of the game—so it is with the mass of human beings. Could we look but on as cool spectators of the games, and shifts, and moves of general life, we should pity, smile, expostulate, reprove, where now at best we give a vacant look, an unmeaning sigh, rage and burn, as in turns we feel the instinct of weakness or passion, and are driven to act under their impulses—but we are drawing the portrait of the multitude, and losing sight of the Enthusiast.

How shall we catch his likeness, and how present it to our readers? It must [illegible] We are not limners, or choose not to be, who cut out profiles in black, with a pair of scissors; nor can we daguerreotype him at a glance. No! The Enthusiast must be the subject of many sittings, though we may give a complete feature or sketch at each, of his aspect for the day; and in doing so, we promise ourselves what we hope will be largely shared in by our readers, a fair amount of interest and gratification.

Enthusiast has some eccentricities, or, to speak more plainly, has his oddities. Tell him so however, tell him as a friend, and he is enthusiastic to rid himself of his oddities. He has friends who now and then tell him so; he has enemies who also take the same liberty; but it is ten to one if you examine it, that both friends and enemies, in specifying some particular oddity, confront and contradict each other, and leave the poor Enthusiast not wiser, but more perplexed, between them. Indeed, so much do they themselves blunder, and so much of guess-work is there in their opinions, that to give things their right names, judging from effects, we should call the friend an enemy, and the enemy a friend. The only conclusion we can come to is by canvassing the motives of each, to decide that the well-meaning and evil-doing are ranged on the one side, and the evil-meaning and well-doing on the other. So odd are many things and many persons besides Enthusiast; but we are again sketching from the crowd, and Enthusiast sits impatient, or rather his friends are impatient, [illegible] Enthusiast is an architect. Upon my word, some one will exclaim, what is coming to us now-a-days?—architects and architecture are obtruded upon us at every turn; and a certain lady of a certain age (which means, as everybody knows, no very large portion of a century) indignantly expostulates against this attempt to engross the public mind and attention with these "new fanglements" of a profession and an art which her father and grandfather's days could very well do without. "Formerly," she says (which means about the ancient period of her youth), "we hardly heard the mention of such things. Architects, indeed! formerly the word even was scarcely so much as known among us. I recollect," says she, "having my attention forced upon it somewhere in my school readings, in some out of the way chapter or exercise, which poor Mrs. Cross-stitch imposed on me at the 'finishing' of my education. I recollect reading something about architecture, and how I mispronounced the word, and how Mrs. Letterhead, our class mistress, told me to pronounce the ch like k; and how she gave us a spelling task with that and several other hard words to learn at home in the evening, and how my poor father, when he *heard me* my task at my bed-time, had a dispute with our neighbour, Percy Fullpurse, as to which was the greater personage, the archdeacon or the architect; for they both insisted that Miss Letterhead was wrong in her *pronounciation*, as Percy had it; and how Percy, who was a great [illegible] and wisdom went very much together, decided that